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FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM Live Line

STATION WRC Radio

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SUBJECT The Freedom of Information Act

KEN ALVORD: Is the Freedom of Information Act working? Does it need changes? Does it need restrictions?

Ken Alvord here with Senator Barry Goldwater for his morning conversation.

Well, Senator, some people say freedom of information has gone a little far when somebody in jail can get ahold of his FBI file, from a Freedom-of-Information-Act request, and find out who ratted on him, maybe to go see him later.

Is that an excess? And how about the general way the law has been interpreted and used so far?

SENATOR BARRY GOLDWATER: Well, frankly, serving on the Intelligence Committee, as I do, the Freedom of Information Act, has been probably one of the most abused laws we've ever had put on the books. Anybody from any country or in any situation can get information on you or on me. In fact, do you know that the FBI alone has 500 people who do nothing but work to satisfy the inquiries caused by the Freedom of Information Act?

Now, I think it should be changed to make it very, very difficult to get information on individuals. Information on criminals should be almost automatic for the police departments and sheriff and other law enforcement departments of this country. But the way it is today, where anybody -- believe me, anybody can walk in and get anything. I don't think it's right. And we were hopeful in the Intelligence Committee that we might include in our bill this year some restrictions on it, but we were not able to get general acceptance of it in the Senate or the House. We've got just too many people, what I call do-gooders, that think your